INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I
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The evolution and growth of Indian novel is highly indebted to Europe and it is interesting to note that the factors which enhanced the growth of novels in both these regions are almost similar.

In England, the Glorious Revolution of 1699 had paved the way for the formation of a new social order. With its emergence a new middle class came into existence and they soon acquired a prominent status in the social strata. A good majority of them belonged to the group of intelligenzia and with their social, political, economic and cultural growth, new national and liberal ideas were formed and they began to exert influence in the socio-political movements which promoted tremendous changes in various fields of activity. These movements paved the growth of individualism too. The above mentioned factors were reflected in the cultural and literary fields also and a new literary form, the novel which is regarded as the epic of modern era began to have a dominant place among readers as it was able to imbibe and picturise the social awakening, realities and the stages and processes evolved in the social transformation. Novel as an art form
helped to analyse man on the basis of history and society. In India too, the rise of the novel can be described as a social phenomenon rather than a natural development in the creative field. According to Michael Zeraffa, 'in myth, manifestly, man is a social being but his story is only developed by obscure means, by the intervention of gods, heroes or magical events. With the novel, society enters history and history enters into Society'1.

In India too it was closely associated with social, political and economic conditions. The prominent factors which promoted transformation and the growth of social and cultural awakening were the introduction of western education, establishment of the Asiatic society to promote Asian studies etc., The Minutes of Macaulay and the Woods despatch helped to open the flood gates of western ideas which led to radical transformation in various fields. The establishment of universities in major cities created a new Indian intelligentia with liberal ideas and new ideologies burst against the age-old static Indian Social Life. A new consciousness which manifested radical and rationalist spirit began to exert influence in all walks of Indian Life. Reason began to replace faith and progressive thinkers felt the urge to reform the age-old customs and conventions which were found
unscientific, illogical, unreasonable and often inhuman, and their motivations gave rise to a social and cultural renaissance. The above mentioned factors paved the way for understanding the realities of Indian Society in its deeper level. No sooner had these social realities been understood and felt by the Indian intelligentsia who had imbibed the western liberal ideas than the stimulation to reform the society and its bitter realities were grown in them. It was this urge which promoted the growth and functioning of social and political movements which later became a part of national struggle which aimed at the Indian Independence. The awareness of nationalism and social realities gave form to a new literature, the literature of social protest. As G.P.Sharma points out, 'The first expressions of Indian discontent and the assertion of nationalism was not mainly political, it was cultural, in so far as, it manifested itself as the search for national identity'.

This resulted in the growth of national consciousness and this aspect was highlighted in the cultural field to a great extent and gradually writers who had in them the national consciousness, directly and indirectly began to participate in the social movements and their reformation activities and struggles appeared as dominant themes in their creative works.
These factors explained the genesis of a national literature which promoted a sort of renaissance in the cultural field. Writers like Ravindra Nath Tagore, Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Ram Mohan Roy etc., were the beginners and later when the social awakening had gathered much momentum thanks to the tremendous efforts of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, the signs of change began to appear in the social field and the 1930's gave birth to many activities which promoted transition and progress. Some among them were the Salt-Satyagraha movement of 1930 and 1932, the three Round Table Conferences, the passing of the Govt. of India Act of 1935, the introduction of provincial autonomy in 1937, the spread of Western Education, the movements for Harijan Uplift and Basic Education, the organisation of the Communist Party and the working class movement etc. All these activities had paved the way for social transformation and a new group of writers began to take active interest in the movements which helped social changes and they began to react and respond to the existing social realities which stood as a stumbling block to social progress. Indian society was then under the grip of many evil practices and customs like untouchability, slavery, communal exploitation, illiteracy etc., The Zamindari system had been exploiting the peasants very cruelly and the working
class society were deprived of social rights and justice and a group of socially committed writers appeared in the literary scene depicting the bitter realities of Indian society. They strongly pointed out and criticised the social evils which affected life and expressed their urge for social reformation. Through their works they played a leading role in promoting the national movements and social awakening to a progressive destination. Thus in the history of Indian literature, the thirties and forties are remarkable periods of achievements. The national movement, Gandhian ideologies, Western Education and its impact, labour movements (proletarian movements) and a sort of renaissance in social and cultural fields made imprints in the social, political, economic and cultural facets of India. Naturally the Indian literary scene led by the intelligentia imbibed the impact and spirit of those various movements and ideologies. There occurred major changes in the treatment of socio-cultural problems and economic factors that influenced them in literature. Factors such as Gandhian ideology, Marxian theory and revival of heritage etc., promoted the changes which had given shape to the progressive writer's movement. The Progressive writer's movement and the proletarian literature highlighted socialist realism and humanism depicting the woes of the working class.
The leading promoters of proletarian literature in India were Mulkraj Anand and Harindranath Chathopadhayaya who wrote it in English, Premchand, Yeshpal and Nagarjun in Hindi, K.A. Abbas and Kishenchander in Urdu, Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, Keshavadev and K. Damodaran in Malayalam etc. These writers portrayed the lives of the downtrodden and the under-privileged classes and their miseries. They were writers of social protest and gutter realism who portrayed the exploitation of the down-trodden by the higher sections of society and the miseries caused by the disorders of the society. Some of their works served the purpose of propaganda.

Mulk Raj Anand was the first Indian novelist in English who portrayed the social realities and the woes of the down-trodden sections of the society. It was indeed a daring attempt in those days to project characters who were considered as outcastes and untouchables. Both the Indian and British readers belonging to elite society condemned the attitude of such writers. A good number of the reading public never wanted to place books that narrated the lives of scavengers, peasants and labourers in their well-furnished reading rooms where they kept classics, philosophical works and novels that depicted the heroic attempts and romances portraying Raja Sahibs as chief character.
Mulk Raj Anand entered the literary scene in the 1930's responding to the tendencies of using the sociological approach of literature. It was a pink decade in Europe where English writers like Spender, Auden and Isherwood, French writers like Gide, and Malraux and German writers like Brecht expressed the woes of society and tried to evolve solutions to the problems and miseries. They analysed the root causes and factors responsible for the miseries. Anand was an active member of the literary circle in London and had made acquaintances with writers and critics. He read widely, attended Marxist study groups, held discussion with other writers and even participated in trade union activities and thus had a close contact with European society and sensibility. In 1929 he came to India, met Gandhiji and lived in his Sabarmati Ashram for some time. He observed the Gandhian ways of life and imbibed certain aspects of Gandhian ideologies. Very soon he became the spokesman of the suffering human beings through his novels. 'As K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar observes: 'He wrote of the people, for the people, and as a man of the people'. He earned much fame as a novelist of social protest and gutter realism. He actively participated in the proletarian literary movement. Along with him there were writers who
wrote in regional languages like Prem Chand, Yashpal, K.A. Abbas, Kishen Chander and Nagarjun.

This movement strongly influenced the literary movement in Malayalam literature too. Writers like Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, Keshavadev, K. Damodaran and others promoted the proletarian writer's movement in Kerala.

A striking similarity at various levels can be traced between Mulk Raj Anand and Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, the most reputed regional novelist at the international level. He is chiefly known as a writer who gave voice to the peasant life of Kuttanad, the rice granary of Travancore. He too entered the literary stage in the 1930's. He too was influenced by Marxian ideology and Freudian theory and he actively participated in the writer's Movement and the literary circle led by Kesari Balakrishna Pillai in Trivandrum, when he was a student in the Law College there. He portrayed the miseries of the working class, the peasants and the scavengers. Most of his works have the background of Kuttanad villages just as Mulk Raj Anand's works cast the background of Punjabi villages. Thakazhi's novels depict a wide range of Kerala Society ranging from the fishermen, peasants and scavengers to aristocratic society. He pictured Kuttanad as the microcosm of Kerala
Society and his works can be regarded as social documents. His novel *Chemmeen* had won him international reputation and has been translated into many foreign languages. His magnum opus *Kayar*, is a saga novel that tells the story of many generations.

A detailed comparative study of the works of Mulk Raj Anand and Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai is of much interest in comparative literature. Not many studies have so far been done in this field. Such a study reveals many striking resemblances in the vision and treatment of themes, characters and situations. Both writers are noted for their portrayal of down-trodden labourers and peasant lives. These two writers appeared on the literary scene in the same decade of nineteen thirties and are still active in their writing careers. They have been able to picture the social, political, economic and cultural aspects of a momentous period and their works can be described as novels of social documents of a significant period, the nation had undergone.

The objectives of this research project is to find out and analyse similarities in the vision and treatment of themes, in the projection of proletarian ideology, and in the realistic presentation of social life and its evolution based
on their major works. It also aims to assess the literary and cultural influences on them and how these two writers stand apart from the other writers of the same period.

This comparative study goes through several stages and they are discussed in various chapters. In the introductory stage the Indian cultural sphere in the wake of national movement, and the appearance of the two writers, influences on them and their relevance in the Indian literary context etc. are discussed.

In the second stage a discussion is made on the social, political and cultural, aspects involved in the making of these writers and the general factors which made them similar and also how they differ from their contemporaries are discussed.

The third chapter is a detailed study of the themes treated by the two authors. The affinity shared by them on thematic level is also discussed here.

The fourth chapter discusses the characterisation of the two authors: characters depicted as types and individuals and characters as representatives of various strata of society are discussed. Along with it their manners, ways of life,
the individuality and other relevant aspects of characters are discussed here. Their identical aspects and differences seen in the portrayal of characters are also discussed.

The fifth chapter discusses the element of realism seen in their novels and their approach to it and their portrayal of social transformation during the period of national movements.

Thus the comparative study discusses certain identical aspects shared by the two authors based on their major works, their social commitment, portrayal of social realities, humanism and protest seen in the works and their objectives as revealed in their works etc. The relevance of their novels as social documents and their role as spokesmen of their society and period are also discussed in the concluding chapter.
Notes

